

**Communications Strategy**  
***Restructuring the National Recreation Reservation Service (NRRS)***

**Project:** Announcing two activities: (1) DoI agencies will join the NRRS in the fall of 2003; and (2) the Corps, Forest Service and DoI collaborate in establishing a new NRRS contract that will go in effect in late 2004.

**Purpose/Intent:** This strategy will provide talking points, a news release, a fact sheet, Q&As and other actions necessary to inform external/internal publics about these changes. This will be a concerted effort by the agencies involved in the establishment of the new reservation service.

**Actions/Responsibilities/Dates:**

Notify Congress	USACE/USDA/DoI	July 1
Note: Agencies will brief committee staffs and, as appropriate, individual senators and representatives.		

Notify Workforce	USACE/FS/NPS	June 25/July 1
------------------	--------------	----------------

Issue news release	USFS/USACE/DoI	July 1
Note: the final news release and Q&As will be provided to all agencies 24 hours in advance of public release.		

Send release to state contacts and other interests	USACE/USFS/NPS/DoI	July 1
Note: this will be done immediately after the release is issued.		

Post release on Web	USACE/USFS/NPS/DoI	July 1
---------------------	--------------------	--------

**Key Points:** (1) The Corps of Engineers, Forest Service and DoI agencies are planning significant changes in the NRRS.

(2) The first change will be to incorporate 12 new NPS facilities and one BLM facility into the NRRS in the fall of 2003. The NRRS contract includes provisions to bring in new agencies and recreation facilities.

(3) The second change will be the solicitation and award of a new contract that will consolidate recreation services for the Corps, Forest Service and DoI agencies. This contract will be advertised in 2004 and take effect early in late 2004.

(4) These actions will further the development of the Recreation One-Stop initiative. Recreation One-Stop is an e-government initiative to make it simpler for citizens to use federal parks and recreation facilities while providing services that are cost-effective and efficient.

(5) The NRRS currently enables the public to make advance reservations for 1,900 campgrounds and other facilities nationwide through a variety of methods. The NRRS

has proven popular and has experienced continuing growth. The NRRS generated nearly a million reservations and \$41.7 million in revenue during FY 2002. Over 50 percent of reservations are now made over the Internet at <http://www.reserveusa.com/>

(6) An interagency working group will coordinate the procurement for restructuring the NRRS. The agencies will conduct a new procurement using full and open competition. The process will also allow the agencies to develop the particular business practices and data standards that are essential to a successful integration of agency requirements into a new one-stop reservation service.

(7) This is intended to be a seamless transition with no disruptions in customer service in the NRRS or the current National Park Service on-line reservation service. The agencies are working together to ensure that the integration of reservation services is transparent to recreation seekers.

#### **News Release:**

#### **DRAFT News Release**

### **RECREATIONISTS TO BENEFIT FROM E-GOV INITIATIVE FOR A SINGLE RESERVATION SERVICE**

#### ***System To Provide One Stop for Campgrounds/Recreation Reservations***

WASHINGTON, July 1, 2003 – The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), and the Department of Interior (DOI) and The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) jointly announced plans today to implement a multi-agency recreation reservation system as an improvement to the current operation of two separate reservation systems.

The new system will offer one-stop service to customers who want to make reservations at federal campgrounds and parks across the nation. Agencies participating in the new service will include the Army Corps of Engineers, the USDA's Forest Service, and two DOI agencies: the National Park Service (NPS) and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM).

"This multi-agency approach for one-stop shopping for federal recreation site reservations capitalizes on our commitment to deliver customer-friendly services to our customers," acting Army Secretary Les Brownlee, Agriculture Secretary Ann M. Veneman and Interior Secretary Gale Norton said in a joint statement. "Working together, we will be able to design a very flexible and responsive service for recreation seekers who are also looking for convenience in making their reservations."

The new system is part of the President's E-Gov Recreation One-Stop initiative to provide customer-friendly information and services to the recreation public by providing a one-stop on-line service for reservations at all federal recreation sites. It will be the eventual successor to the National Recreation Reservation Service (NRRS), which was established in 1997 by the Corps and Forest Service to manage reservations

at their recreation facilities. The Forest Service and the Corps have used the NRRS since its inception.

The NRRS currently enables the public to make advance reservations at 1,900 campgrounds, cabins and other facilities nationwide through a variety of methods including toll free call centers, internet reservations, at parks or campgrounds, government offices and visitor centers, and lotteries for high use facilities such as permits to enter the Boundary Waters Canoe Area.

The NRRS continues to experience popularity and growth through increased public use. During FY 2002, the NRRS generated nearly a million reservations and \$41.7 million in revenue. More than 50 percent of reservations are now made by internet access at <http://www.reserveusa.com/>

The National Parks Reservation Service processes nearly 650,000 reservations annually and produced \$12 million in revenue in FY 2002.

The National Park Reservation Service handles reservations for tours of places such as the Washington Monument and Carlsbad Caverns as well as campgrounds for 28 units in the National Park System. Until November 2004, visitors needing reservations for tours or campsites at those 28 parks should continue to visit the website at <http://reservations.nps.gov/>

The NRRS was designed to allow other federal agencies to join the service. The NPS, which has been operating a separate reservation service, will add 12 parks currently not involved in any reservation service into the NRRS this October. The BLM will add one facility into the service.

In 2004, there will be an open solicitation and award for a new contract to provide one-stop on-line reservation service for all federal agencies. The new system will be fully operational in late 2004. All agencies are working together for a seamless integration of the current reservation service systems. For recreationists seeking reservations, the integration will be transparent with no disruptions in service.

Contacts: Jane Knowlton, USDA Forest Service, 202-205-1094  
[jknowlton@fs.fed.us](mailto:jknowlton@fs.fed.us) ; David Hewitt, Corps of Engineers, 202-761-0289,  
[david.w.hewitt@usace.army.mil](mailto:david.w.hewitt@usace.army.mil), Joan Moody, Department of Interior, 202-208-6416,  
[Joan\\_Moody@ios.doi.gov](mailto:Joan_Moody@ios.doi.gov)

## **Fact Sheet:**

### **Fact Sheet National Recreation Reservation Service**

**Subject:** Restructuring the National Recreation Reservation Service to providing a one-stop reservation service for the public at federal parks and facilities.

**Background:** The National Recreation Reservation Service (NRRS), established in 1997 to offer reservations at U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and U.S. Forest Service

facilities, will become the one-stop service for reservations at federal parks and facilities. The Office of Management and Budget designated the NRRS as the Recreation One-Stop service to make it simpler for citizens to use federal parks and facilities. This is an E-Government initiative to provide cost-efficient and effective services. The NRRS will begin incorporating National Park Service and Bureau of Land Management facilities in the fall of 2003. There will be a new contract solicitation in 2004 and a fully integrated service that brings together the Corps of Engineers, Forest Service, National Park Service and other Interior agencies in late 2004.

**Facts:**

The NRRS currently enables the public to make advance reservations for 1,900 campgrounds and other facilities nationwide through a variety of methods. The NRRS has proven popular and has experienced continuing growth. The NRRS generated nearly a million reservations and \$41.7 million in revenue during FY 2002. Over 50 percent of the reservations are now made over the Internet at <http://www.reserveusa.com/>. The National Parks Reservation Services processes nearly 350,000 reservations annually, producing \$12 million in revenue in FY 2002.

The National Parks Park Reservation Service (<http://reservations.nps.gov/>) processes nearly 650,000 reservations annually, producing about \$12 million in revenue in FY 2002. The National Park Reservation Service handles reservations for tours of places such as the Washington Monument and Carlsbad Caverns as well as campgrounds for 28 units in the National Park System.

The NRRS was designed to allow other federal agencies to join the service. The National Park Service, which has been operating a separate reservation service, and the Bureau of Land Management will begin adding recreation facilities to the NRRS inventory in late 2004. Other National Park Service facilities, together with those of the Bureau of Land Management, Fish and Wildlife Service and Bureau of Reclamation, may be added when a new contract takes effect.

The agencies will conduct new procurement using full and open competition. Initial contacts to potential vendors will be advertised in 2003, and the contract award is planned in mid-2004. The process will also allow the agencies to document the particular business processes and data standards that are essential to a successful integration of agency requirements into a new one-stop reservation service.

This is intended to be a seamless transition with no disruptions in customer service in the NRRS or the current National Park Service reservation service. The agencies are working together to ensure that the integration of reservation services is transparent to recreation seekers.

**Q&As:**

***Restructuring the National Recreation Reservation Service  
Questions and Answers***

Q1: The agencies announced in January that the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) had decided that the National Park Service (NPS) would cancel a solicitation for a reservation contract and join the National Recreation Reservation Service (NRRS). What is the status of that action?

A1: OMB and NPS agreed that NPS would extend its current contract for reservation services until October 2003 while NPS made preparations to join the new interagency system.

Q2: What caused the change?

A2: OMB and NPS subsequently agreed that NPS should continue to provide uninterrupted service with its current reservation service while NPS prepared to join the new interagency system in late 2004.

Q3: What are the current plans?

A3: NPS parks now on the NPS reservation service will remain on that system until late 2004. NPS plans to bring 12 parks and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) plans to bring one recreation area into the NRRS in October 2003. These parks are not currently registered as part of a national reservation system. There will be a solicitation for a new contract that provides a one-stop reservation service for the federal agencies in 2004, with operations to begin in late 2004. The agencies taking part in the new service will include the Corps of Engineers (USACE), Forest Service (FS), NPS and BLM.

Q4: What are the parks?

A4: The NPS parks are Arches National Park, Big Bend National Park, Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park, the Blue Ridge Parkway, Bryce Canyon National Park, Buffalo National River, Chickasaw National Recreation Area, Curecanti National Recreation Area, Lake Roosevelt National Recreation Area, Lassen Volcanic National Park, North Cascades National Park and Ozark National Scenic Rivers. The BLM recreation area is Loon Lake Recreation Area.

Q5: The USACE and FS dedicated a great deal of time and effort to build the NRRS into a successful reservation service. Will all the experience and expertise that went into establishing a smooth-running enterprise be lost with a new contract?

A5: Not at all. The NRRS and NPRS systems have been successful, and the NRRS will evolve into an integrated reservation service that can address the unique needs of visitors to recreation sites at participating federal agencies. The specifications for a new contract to support the NRRS will build upon the "lessons learned" with previous systems, so it meets the requirements of all the federal agencies with recreation-related reservations.

Q6: There is still a lot of room for improvement in the current NRRS system. Will the field staffs from all the participating agencies get the chance to offer their ideas about features that should be included in the new contract?

A6: Yes. The first step in the contracting process will be a Request for Information (RFI) during which the agencies will ask for comments and suggestions from everyone who has a stake and interest in the NRRS. This includes the field staffs.

Q7: The NPS will also have the chance to provide input during the RFI. NPS uses different business processes to run both their reservation service and their facilities. Does this mean that the USACE and FS will have to give up the processes they put in place to make the NRRS successful?

A7: The intent of the new contract is to build upon the processes and the best business practices that have proven successful. The purpose of the RFI is to determine the improvements or enhancement that are needed and to incorporate the requirements of each of the participating agencies into the new contract.

Q8: The current NRRS contract includes an option for another three-year extension. There is widespread agreement that the NRRS has been successful and is well-accepted by campers and other recreation seekers. The contract includes a provision that allows other agencies to take part. Why not just extend the current contract?

A8: That would appear to be the preferred course of action. However, the scope of the contract focuses more on campsite reservations than on other forms of recreation that require reservations such as the tours offered by NPS. When the agencies draft a new contract solicitation, the intent is to include the flexibility in the scope of services to accommodate a whole range of recreation activities. In addition, a new solicitation will offer the opportunity to revisit policies and procedures in the current contracts and make improvements where desirable.

Q9: Your plan appears to suggest that all will go smoothly in the solicitation and award of a new contract. What happens if there is a protest that delays the award of the new contract. What then?

A9: While no one wants a protest, it is always necessary to have a contingency plan in place. One of the available options is to keep current contracts in place until the agencies can resolve any possible conflicts and have the new contract in place.

Q10: What is the timeline and the major milestones for the new solicitation?

A10: The timeline and milestones for the new solicitation are:

- July/August 2003 – Request for information to the field (e.g., internal brain pick)
- August-September 2003 – Request for information to the vendor industry
- December 2003 – Issue RFP for the new federal reservation service
- June 2004 – Contract award
- November 2003 – “Go Live” of the new service